

Neighbor Appreciation Day TEN YEARS LATER

By Judith Wood

Ten years ago I initiated Neighbor Appreciation Day in Seattle. I was inspired to do this by my wonderful, caring neighbors and my belief that they represented many more generous hearts and helping hands throughout the city. I began thinking about a way to emphasize this goodness after reading a syndicated newspaper article about horrible neighbors. The paper solicited local neighbor nightmares and I was very discouraged to read about various feuds and rifts between neighbors. I had a preschooler and twin babies at home and I didn't want to be faced with a world of negativity – I needed to look on the bright side. Many of my neighbors helped me do that.

I got the idea of designating a day to honor and encourage friendships between neighbors. I wrote a letter describing my neighbors and their many thoughtful acts and suggesting the City create Neighbor Appreciation Day. I delivered my letter to Mayor Norm Rice when he visited Phinney Ridge for a walking tour. He liked my idea and asked the Department of Neighborhoods to develop this idea further.

We chose the Saturday before Valentine's Day in February – a time when people would have to make a conscious effort to reconnect with neighbors they may not have seen too often through the cold, rainy, winter months. An official proclamation was issued, more newspaper articles were written – telling the magical stories of loving neighbors, and community groups planned events. The idea of a greeting card was sprung, and things took off from there. For the past ten years there

has been a new card every year, designed by a young Seattleite and underwritten by generous support from SAFECO. These free cards are available to anyone through Neighborhood Service Centers and other community outlets.

In the last ten years, my children have grown and my block has changed. I feel a little more able to help my neighbors and a bit less needy of their support. There are new things I appreciate though: the kindness of the customers on my kids' weekly paper routes; the eager Girl Scout cookie and Boy Scout Christmas tree buyers; the generous folks who respond to our pleas for food and other assistance for needy families at our nearby elementary school. I feel safe knowing my children have many adults who care about them in our neighborhood. I learned first-hand that it isn't only kids who need a watchful eye – a neighbor came to the aid of my husband when he fell off a ladder.

Over these ten years, there have been occasional tensions on our block, as there will inevitably be when people live in close association. Babies have been born, funerals held, and block parties celebrated - complete with bicycle parades, potlucks, and the perennial favorite egg-tossing contest. The pink flamingo trophies migrate from yard to yard, but never seem to disappear. I hope Neighbor Appreciation Day will stay around for a long time too. The way we mark the day may change from year to year, but hopefully we will all take time to thank our neighbors and to try to be better ones ourselves. *



NEIGHBOR APPRECIATION DAY IS SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7

What will you do to thank your neighbors on Neighbor Appreciation Day? There are many ways you can celebrate residents in your community for the contributions they have made. Here are some ideas from past year's events:

- Schools partnered with a community council in one neighborhood to co-host a free pancake breakfast.
- Some neighborhood stewardship groups scheduled work parties.
- Several community associations and organizations held open houses.
- Block Watch groups held potlucks.
- Several neighborhoods held special events with entertainment and certificates of appreciation for neighborhood activists.
- Some Seattle's community centers held festive open houses.
- One community held a neighborhood cleanup. Another brought neighbors together for a potluck.
- All of Seattle's fire stations were open for public tours and demonstrations.
- Woodland Park Zoo invited zoo neighbors to attend a free docent-led tour.

If your group is planning a special event for Neighbor Appreciation Day, call Natasha Jones at 615-0950 or send e-mail to natasha.jones@seattle.gov so your event can be added to the comprehensive calendar for elected officials and news media.

But don't stop there! Brighten someone's day by telling them how much you appreciate the little things they do to make your life better. The Department of Neighborhoods and SAFECO have teamed up to make free Neighbor Appreciation Day cards available to you. Pick them up at your Neighborhood Service Center after January 19 or call 615-0950 to request yours today!

100th Birthday for University Heights Center

On Saturday, October 4, 2003, more than 100 alumni, tenants, neighbors, and friends gathered in the 100-year-old University Heights Center to celebrate the facility's century of service to the community. Seattle Public Schools provided photographs from earlier days and memorabilia were on display. Cedars Restaurant catered and guests were treated to a fabulous buffet of Indian food. Irish music, played by Kevin and Linda Gow, created a lively and warm atmosphere. Jim Rogers, President of the Board, emceed the program, which included City Councilmember Peter Steinbreuck. Richard Sorenson, Executive Director of the Center, recognized alumni from every decade, including Mary Hemphill Pinkham, the oldest alumni present. Mary attended University Heights in 1918. Thea Preuss was the youngest alumni, having attended in 1989. The NW Boys Choir group, Vocalpoint, entertained the audience with rock and roll from the '50s. Everyone who came walked away with fond memories and stronger feelings about the old school and the special place it has become for thousands of locals over the years. *



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Mayor: Gregory J. Nickels

Director: Yvonne Sanchez

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Revitalized South Lake Union Would Create at Least 32,000 New Jobs, Report Says

An analysis of the potential economic impacts of Mayor Greg Nickels' plan to revitalize South Lake Union shows that substantially more jobs would be created than previously predicted and millions of additional revenue would come to the city each year.

A draft of the findings by economist Paul Sommers, senior research fellow at the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington, was released in December and showed that, if the proposed investments are made in the area, between 32,000 and 39,000 new jobs would be created in Seattle by 2025. Counting direct and indirect benefits from South Lake Union Development, Sommers said 56,000 jobs would be created statewide: the equivalent of another Microsoft in terms of employment.

"South Lake Union is truly a neighborhood of opportunity," said Nickels. "Nothing is more important to our city's long-term health than creating good, new jobs. Today's news is absolutely spectacular. South Lake Union will become a vibrant and vital neighborhood where people will both live and work. And with so many new jobs concentrated in the area, the entire city will prosper."

Nickels has laid out an ambitious agenda to revitalize South Lake Union. The mayor's plan builds on the biotechnology

base already established in the area and envisions a diverse neighborhood with a variety of jobs, residences and family amenities. To make the Nickels' plan happen, significant investments must be made in a handful of projects essential for the neighborhood to meet its potential and accommodate growth. Those projects include:

- Simplifying traffic connections in the area, including reconnecting surface streets across Aurora Avenue (SR 99) and improving the so-called Mercer mess;
- Connecting the heart of the new neighborhood with downtown via a new street car line;
- Building a new City Light sub-station; and
- Building two new parks and a new wharf.

Sommers found that the city could expect to see about \$247 million in cumulative new revenues over the next 20



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http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/newsletter_signup.htm

years. This equates to about \$16 million of additional annual revenue to the city by 2025. His research considered how quickly new biotech and other kinds of businesses would locate in the neighborhood and other competitive factors.

"South Lake Union will fund basic services for all of Seattle," Nickels said. "In 2025, that \$16 million could enable us to hire 90 new police officers, or repave 50 miles of city roads."

The city also announced that both the Sommers and OPM findings would be reviewed by an independent four-person panel to ensure both their accuracy and the validity of the methodology used. For more information, visit the mayor's website at www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/lakeunion/ *

Volunteer opportunities abound at Seattle Parks

By David Takami, *Seattle Parks and Recreation*

Looking for an interesting and rewarding way to get involved in your neighborhood? Volunteering is a great way to support your community, meet new people, help a child, plant a tree, share your knowledge or just have fun.

Seattle Parks and Recreation offers abundant and varied volunteer opportunities all over the city. Each year, thousands of citizens and hundreds of community groups help restore and clean parks, mentor children and teens, teach visitors about nature, or pitch in at special events.

Your volunteer efforts can range from a few hours to an ongoing commitment. Parks volunteer coordinators will work with you to find a volunteer project that fits your interests and schedule.

A partial list of volunteer opportunities at Seattle Parks and Recreation:

- Adopt a park and work on maintaining and improving it.
- Restore habitats, plant trees, weed gardens, pick up litter, repair trails or playgrounds, or clean up beaches at weekend "work parties."
- Enhance the visitor experience at the Seattle Aquarium through interpretation in exhibit areas.
- Volunteer as a guide or maintenance helper at the Japanese Garden.
- Become a docent at Discovery Park to help educate visitors about the park's flora and fauna.
- Encourage a youngster to succeed! Tutor, mentor or just listen and share ideas.
- Get involved at your neighborhood community center supervising activities for children, teens or adults - from sports to drama, late night programs to special events.
- Play ball! Coach a youth athletic team.
- Chaperone a teen event.
- Help pool, boating or beach staff with aquatics programs.
- Educate others about the environment through stewardship programs.
- Share your community savvy by serving on an advisory council.
- Help kids be stewards of "intergenerational gardens" at various community centers
- Put your business skills to work writing grants, answering phones or designing web sites. *



SEATTLE PARKS VOLUNTEER CONTACT INFORMATION

North Volunteer Coordinator: Theresa McEwen
206-615-0691 theresa.mcewen@seattle.gov

Seattle Aquarium Volunteer Coordinator: Sue Donohue-Smith
206-386-4342 sue.donohue-smith@seattle.gov

Central Volunteer Coordinator: Adrienne Caver-Hall
206-684-7710 adrienne.caver-hall@seattle.gov

Japanese Garden Guides Contact: Eva Lombardi
Registration for March training sessions ends on Feb. 15.
206-283-9902 evalombardi@earthlink.net

South Volunteer Coordinator: Janine VanSanden
206-684-4557 janine.vansanden@seattle.gov

Discovery Park Docent Program Coordinator: Dan Moore
Applications due Feb. 3.
206-386-4236 dan.moore@seattle.gov

You can also consult our web site at www.cityofseattle.net/parks/Volunteers/index.htm

HELP NAME FOUR NEW PARKS

Seattle Parks and Recreation invites the public to submit potential names for new parks in four Seattle neighborhoods: Mt. Baker, southwest Capitol Hill, Green Lake and Whittier Heights/Greenwood.

Mt. Baker: Seattle Parks acquired this .11-acre property from the Washington State Department of Transportation in January 2003 with funding from the Pro Parks Levy Opportunity Fund. Located at 31st Ave. S between S Atlantic and S Day streets, the park offers panoramic views of the Olympic Mountains, Puget Sound, Rainier Valley, Beacon Hill, and downtown. Earlier this year, the community obtained a Neighborhood Matching Fund grant to create a schematic plan for the new park that will include a viewpoint; benches, seat walls, and a deck.

Southwest Capitol Hill: Located on Boren Ave. between Spruce and Fir streets, this .28-acre site provides views of Mount Rainier and Rainier Valley, and the Pac Med Building. Seattle Parks acquired the land from another City department. Community Development Block Grant funds contributed to the design and construction of the new park, which includes stairs leading to the site from Boren Ave, a small plaza, new trees, landscaping and irrigation.

Green Lake: Parks acquired this .33-acre parcel of open space in the

Green Lake neighborhood in 2001 with funding from the Pro Parks Levy, King County Conservation Futures Tax, and the Washington State Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation program. Located at the northwest corner of Linden Ave. N



and N 67th St., the land was formerly an orchard. The Pro Parks Levy, the Neighborhood Matching Fund and the community are funding site improvements such as a P-patch, tool shed, paths, lawn, benches, planting, and a stairway entrance. The park is under construction and should be complete by the end of the year.

Whittier Heights/Greenwood: With the help of the Pro Parks Levy and King County, Seattle Parks bought this surplus Seattle City Light substation and additional park land (total area: .21 acres) on the corner of 6th Ave. NW and NW 76th

St. The Pro Parks Levy, the Neighborhood Matching Fund and the community are funding park improvements that include a large lawn area, landscaping, paths, neighborhood gathering area and interactive features for children's play.

The Park Naming Committee is comprised of one representative designated by the Board of Park Commissioners, one by the Chair of the City Council Parks, Education and Libraries Committee, and one by the Parks Superintendent. Criteria the Committee considers in naming parks include: geographical location, historical or cultural significance, and natural or geological features. A park may be named for a person no longer living (deceased a minimum of three years) who made a significant contribution to parks and/or recreation.

The Naming Committee will consider all suggestions and make a recommendation to Parks Superintendent Ken Bounds, who makes the final decision.

Please submit suggestions for park names **in writing by Friday, Jan. 30, 2004**, and include an explanation of how your suggestion matches the naming criteria. Send to Seattle Parks and Recreation, Park Naming Committee, 100 Dexter Ave. N, Seattle, WA 98109, or by e-mail to paula.hoff@seattle.gov *



Find out what's going on in neighborhoods around the city!

Watch Neighborhood News on the Seattle Channel. Visit www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods for a link to streamed video of each program, or check the schedule at www.seattlechannel.org. Rotation currently includes programs on Lake City & University District, Central Area & Capitol Hill, Southeast & Greater Duwamish, and Queen Anne/Magnolia & Downtown.

Seattle Takes Second in International Sustainability/Livability Competition

On October 6, 2003, Seattle took second place and a gold certificate for the 200,000 to one million population category in the annual Nations in Bloom (recently renamed International Livable Cities) competition in Apeldoorn, Netherlands.

Nations in Bloom is an annual international competition that invites cities from all over the world to participate. Its objective is to encourage the best practices, innovation, and leadership that lead to a vibrant, environmentally sustainable, and lively community with a high quality of life.

Nations In Bloom recognizes cities for their achievements in five categories: Environmentally Sensitive Practices, Enhancement of the Landscape, Heritage Management, Community Involvement, and Planning for the Future. Nations in Bloom is the only competition of its kind endorsed by the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP).

Nations in Bloom recognizes five population categories: below 10,000, 10,001 to 50,000, 50,001 to 200,000, 200,001 to one million, and more than one million. Each community is judged not on how it compares to others in its population category, but on how it performs on each judging criterion within its cul-



tural, political, economic, geographic and climatic circumstances.

The Seattle initiatives highlighted in the presentation included, in addition to our commitment to the benefits of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), were:

- The 1903 Olmsted plan for Seattle's parks and boulevards
- Creative reuse of former landfills, railroad rights of way, industrial sites and military bases as parkland and open space
- Stewardship of forests, landscapes, habitats and watersheds through Best Management Practices and Integrated Pest Management
- The Environmental Action Agenda we are implementing through aggressive conservation



practices, curbside recycling, sustainability scorecards, car use reduction programs, the clean fleet program, City Light's commitment to achieving no net greenhouse gas emissions, natural drainage systems

- The profusion of public art
- Preservation of our wealth of natural, built and cultural assets through the historic preservation program, our museums, and our celebration of our diverse ethnic heritage
- Eager engagement of citizens in civic discussion and decision making.

For more information on Nations in Bloom, please visit the web at: <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/publications/NIB.htm> *

A job like no other. In a city like no other.

The Seattle Police Department is now hiring people interested in becoming police officers. For information, go to <http://www.cityofseattle.net/police/jobs/sworn/default.htm>, or contact Officer Renee Witt at (206) 615-0762 or Officer Sue Long at (206) 386-1277.

City Neighborhood Update for 2004

By Victor J. Barry DDS, CNC Chair 2004

As the City Neighborhood Council (CNC) begins its 2004 agenda calendar, one major goal stands out: to increase the relevancy of its advisory role to the mayor and City Council by expanding its representation. The City Council chartered the CNC in 1988 to give neighborhoods better representation at city hall. It is made up of one representative from each of the 13 District Councils. In turn, District Councils are made up of neighborhood council representatives plus other groups that want to be represented, such as local chambers of commerce and groups made up of 20 or more members on average. Since there are so many decisions made that affect every area of the city, everyone should be at the table.

The CNC's intent is to increase the diversity of this latter category to make the district council network a better demographic reflection of the population. The Delridge district has taken the lead with this initiative. Thus, the CNC's positions on issues will carry more weight with

the Mayor, the city government departments, the City Council, and the media, since it will better reflect the full spectrum of Seattle's neighborhoods.

In achieving its goals for 2003, the CNC was very effective, and the summary of its successes comes from the source: outgoing chair Irene Wall. The CNC was lucky to have her talents at the helm. The following bullets are taken directly from her report on CNC-2003:

- Expanded scope, membership, participation and success of the Neighborhood Planning Committee, under the direction of Cindy Barker (Southwest) and Lisa Merki (Southeast), which helped refocus many neighborhoods' interest in implementation of their neighborhood plans.
- Highly successful Comprehensive Plan public involvement meetings organized by the Planning Committee.
- Establishment of a new Transportation Committee with city-wide representation and involvement by SDOT staff.
- Increased activism of CNC through involvement in the mono-rail EIS scoping and hosting of panel discussions; testimony before the City Council and neighborhood budget priorities; leadership and logistical support for the Cross-Town Coalition's inaugural city-wide meeting and subsequent council candidate questionnaire.
- Securing CNC representation on Seattle Public Utilities Citizens Rate and Level Of Service Advisory Committee, and Citizens' Transportation Advisory Committee.
- Providing forum at meetings for consultation with seated City

Council members and three new incoming council members, as well as a direct dialogue with Mayor Nickels.

- Providing a forum at meetings for substantive discussions with department heads, including SPU's Chuck Clarke, DPD's Diane Sugimura, and Budget Director Dwight Dively.
- Ongoing representation on the Libraries For All Citizens Implementation Panel through Dennis Ross (Southwest).
- Success in exercising new policies for a neighborhood matching fund regarding sensitive issues, including new conflict of interest policy and methods for conducting grantee interviews, overseen by NMF longstanding chair Doug Lorentzen (Magnolia/QA).

The CNC is ably staffed by Brent Crook of the Department of Neighborhoods and Department Director Yvonne Sanchez, attended many of our meetings. Each year, the CNC has the benefit of new members' ideas, and it maintains an historical perspective through veteran members. The CNC and the District Council system are the conduit for channeling tremendous and tireless volunteer talent, which benefits this great city. Although there are inevitable debates about priorities and strategies, the CNC's overall mission is simple, and it's the same as that of the Mayor's Office, the city government departments, and the City Council: to make Seattle an even better place to live. We in the CNC look forward to progress in moving closer to that noble goal in 2004. ✱

The official purpose of the CNC is listed in the bylaws: "The CNC's purpose is to provide citywide coordination for the Neighborhood Matching Funds, Neighborhood Budget Prioritization, and Neighborhood Planning Programs. The CNC shall also provide a forum for discussion of common neighborhood issues and is available for advice on policies necessary for the effective and equitable implementation of a neighborhood planning and assistance program."

Clean Seattle Initiative Celebrates Two Year Mark


Mayor Greg Nickels joined dozens of volunteers, community members, and city staff at Carkeek Park's Environmental Learning Center in December to celebrate the two year anniversary of his Clean Seattle Initiative.



Over the past 20 events, more than 1,300 volunteers have taken part in the inter-departmental partnership with communities citywide to make a difference by creating a cleaner city. By joining forces with business, civic organizations, and citizen volunteers, Clean Seattle Initiative has shown significant results:

- Litter Pick-ups - 31,315 lbs.
- Asphalt Spread - 139,000 lbs.
- Streetlights Repaired - 1,900
- Graffiti Removals or Paintouts - 4,020
- Plantings (Trees and Flowers) - 1,016

Seattle Transportation, Seattle Arts and Cultural Affairs, Seattle City Light, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Seattle Police Department, and Seattle Public Utilities are partners in the monthly events. The next Clean Seattle Initiative is scheduled for January 17 in Northeast Seattle. For more information about that event, contact Karen Ko at (206) 233-3732 or send e-mail to karen.ko@seattle.gov *

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